

(Demo) Civilian Conservation Corps



FWSCCC-0061

Narrative Report
May + June 1936
Sod House - BF-2

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for May and June 1936
Sod House Camp BF-2 Oregon.

STATION LIBRARY

Malheur Refuge



Sod House Camp was established here on May 5, 1936, having been moved from Cottonwood Camp in Idaho.

Approximately 121 boys are in camp for duty. The picture shows the mess hall, most of the boys' quarters and officers quarters, is shown, with the Blitzen river in the right foreground. Malheur Lake is beyond the trees in the left foreground and next to the low hills in the distance.

The site is the place where one of the earliest buildings stood adjacent to Malheur Lake, a sod house built by two brothers, Chapman, and from this the place came to be called Sod House Spring. The site for the headquarters was selected because it is centrally located, geographically, with respect to the lands of the refuge, accessible, both from the lands of the original refuge bordering the lake and the recently added sixty five thousand acres of the Blitzen Valley which extends thirty five miles south from the shores of the lake.

The site of the buildings is on the north slope of a low hill giving a fine view of the lake to the north and an abundant supply of water is furnished by Sod House Spring.



Pouring the concrete for the new reservoir upon the hill southeast of camp; it will have a capacity of 15,000 gallons; the water will be used to supply the new Biological buildings and will be pumped from Sod House spring some 300 ft. distant.

Two crews worked different shifts, one starting work at 5 a.m. the second at 12 noon; the job was finished at 2 p.m., the reason for the early start being on account of a possible breakdown.

A 10" wall, with center partition of the same thickness, was poured in 9 hours with a $3\frac{1}{2}$ cu. ft. cement mixer; 2125 cu. ft. was poured at this time, the floor and roof being poured later.





Drilling holes for anchor posts for the fence. The compressor and jack hammer were being used here to shoot rock for road work. $7\frac{1}{2}$ ft. juniper posts were used and are set in the ground 30", 16' apart on the boundary line, 5 barbed wires being stretched from post to post.



Cutting willow stays to lace in the wires: 3 stays were laced between each set of posts. This is necessary to keep breachy cattle from parting the wires and forcing their way through.



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it was in
about 3/4 of
posts being rot
off at the bottom.



The new fence: three miles of boundary fence built south of camp, for the principal purpose of keeping stock off the nesting grounds, thus preserving natural coverage for birds; hay is cut on these areas during the late summer and sold.



Construction of the dyke on the Malheur Lake Migration Waterfowl Refuge: Since May 11 the boys have moved 30,000 cu. yds. of earth, working 2 cats two shifts each working day; this work is some 12 miles north-east of camp.

The specific purpose of the dykes is to keep water from spreading over a large area and becoming so shallow that it actually becomes an evaporating pot; then too, the dyke being several feet above the water causes the winds to rise somewhat; this rising of the wind lessens the evaporation caused from the whip of the wind.

When the dyke is completed it will be about 14 miles long, 20 ft. wide on top and varies from 1 to 6½ ft. in height, and will be used as a game protection road.

Eventually, when trucks become available the road bed on the dyke will be covered with volcanic cinders, used as gravel on roads.





Grubbing sage brush
in the road right-
of-way.



Piling and burning
sage brush from the
road right-of-way.



Ripping up the rock
and hard soil prepa-
tory to grading the
road; this is nec-
essary that rocks may
be loosened and rolled
to one side in order
that the road bed set-
tle evenly.



A portion of the three miles of road bed, graded and ready for surfacing; this is a portion of the center road which will be constructed from Sod House Camp to the P ranch as a game protection road.



Grading, picking up road and general maintenance of roads which are used in transporting men to and from work and hauling material to the job; 21 miles have been maintained by the boys.



Boys digging ditches for sewage disposal, drainage, water systems: Approximately a mile of ditch was dug around the headquarters buildings for the above purposes, the boys laying the sewer pipe, drainage tile and water system, working under the supervision of a plumber. The ditches are 2 ft. wide and vary in depth from 2 to 9 ft., approximately 30,000 cu. ft. of earth being moved in digging.

On June 25 an Indian skull was found, perfect except for the lower jaw, which was missing, and two dolls or idols, one leg and one arm were broken, the parts being found however; these dolls were colored red, war paint probably having been used to color them.



Boys cutting the stone for the headquarters building.
The nature of the rock makes it necessary to cut three sides before it may be layed in place.



Side view of the Service building with some of the building rock in the rough before being cut.

Headquarters buildings for the Boillogical Survey, which were under way when the present Sod House Camp was established, are being pushed as rapidly as possible; these buildings are located about 600 ft. east of camp and are of native sand and volcanic stone, cream tan in color and r are approximately 18" thick. Stone is hauled by CCC trucks 20 miles and a stone cutting crew of CCC boys get the large pieces ready for the mason and his CCC helpers, while a carpenter and crew is busy on other parts of the buildings, putting up structures, working at inside finishing, roofs and etc.

The boys also work at lathing inside the buildings, wiring and plumbing; mixing concrete for the floors and building foundations.



The barn, under construction at Biological Headquarters, Sod House Spring.

Note the shape of the rock before they are shaped to lay in the Building.



A picture of the storage shed, office and headquarters house. The men seen in the picture are digging ditches for the water sewage system.



A distant picture of the town of Narrows. Note the bridge across the lake channel near the left of the trees.

In early days the local people assembled to shoot ducks, and the person who could drop the greatest number of ducks on the bridge was entitled to all of his ammunition, free, from the Narrows store. Ducks which dropped in the water were not counted.

The Biological Survey, in protecting and propagating birds and ducks, is attempting to bring conditions back to where they were, and waterfowl on this Refuge is rapidly increasing in numbers.

Brackets have been placed on 250 poles and 4 miles of poles set, preparatory to the new construction of a metallic telephone line from Sod House Camp to the P ranch.